WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY
(SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET)

10/594479

International application No.

IAP01 Rec'd PCT/PTO 2 8 SEP 2006

PCT/EP2005/05154

Re Box No. V:

1 . Reference is made to the following documents:

D1 : US 2003/061384 A1 (NAKATANI BRYCE) 27 March 2003 (2003-03-27)

D2 : EP 0 747 795 A (XEROX CORPORATION) 11 December 1996 (1996-12-11)

D3 : EP 1 492 310 A (THE BOC GROUP, INC) 29 December 2004 (2004-12-29)

D4 : US 4 843 539 A (BURY ET AL) 27 June 1989 (1989-06-27)

2   INDEPENDENT CLAIM 1

It appears that the present application discloses an automatic addressing method that is generally known as DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol). The use of DHCP in an industrial automation system is already disclosed by document D1 (paragraph [0019]). DHCP is also used in D1 for the same purpose as in the present application, i.e. for the automatic detection and activation of a new or changed communications subscriber in the communications network. In other words: "plug and play" functionality in an industrial communications network.

Document D1 discloses (the references in parentheses relate to this document):
A method for dynamically configuring (D1: DHCP) a modular machine whose machine modules are connected to one another and to a control device via a communications network (paragraphs [0001], [0016], [0017] and Figure 1), comprising the following steps:

- determining the communications partners in the communications network by means of one of the communications partners while the machine is in operation (paragraphs [0017] and [0019]),
- generating a suitable communications configuration by means of one of the communications partners (paragraphs [0017] and [0019]) and
- activating the generated communications configuration during the runtime of the machine (paragraphs [0017] and [0019]).

The steps of the method are disclosed in paragraphs [0017] and [0019] of document Dl as steps according to the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP).

Documents D2, D3 and D4 are also to be regarded as anticipating the subject matter of claim 1 by prior publication or prior use (D2: Figure 1; page 2, lines 21-23; page 3, lines 23-43), (D3: paragraphs [0016], [0018] and [0019]), (D4: Figure 1, column 6, lines 15-43).

3   INDEPENDENT CLAIM 7

3.1 Since the independent device claim 7 only defines a device by means of which the steps of the method claim 1 can be executed, the lack-of-novelty objection against method claim 1 also applies, mutatis mutandis, to device claim 7.

3.2 The application does not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT, because claim 7 is not clear.
The independent device claim 7 should not only specify that the steps of the method as claimed in claim 1 are executable, but that for the purpose of dynamically configuring a modular machine the device is **configured in such a way** that the steps **are** actually executed according to an allowable method claim 1. (PCT/GL/ISPE/1 Guidelines, paragraphs 10.12 – 10.16)

4   DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-6, 8-11

Claims 2-6, 8-11 contain no features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step.

Documents Dl, D2 and D3 are all prejudicial to novelty for the dependent claims 2-6 and 8-11.

5   Contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1 a) ii) PCT, neither the relevant prior art

disclosed in documents D1-D4 nor these documents themselves are cited in the description.